EXHIBIT A

Dear Colleague

You have requested release date information for EMBL entry: X96526

The date given in the first DT line of this entry is the date the entry first became available for public disclosure.
Example:
DT   dd-month-year (Rel. nn, Created)

The date in the Submission Reference RL line
Example:
RL   Submitted (dd-month-year) to the EMBL/GenBank/DDBJ databases,
is the date that EMBL received the submission from the submitter.

DISCLAIMER: PLEASE NOTE

No guarantee is given that release date given in the entry is accurate. The actual release date will depend on the availability of network services.

No guarantee is given that the entry is complete and accurate. In particular the sequence data of the entry may not conform to the sequence data of the original publication where the sequence was first disclosed to the public.

I enclose a copy of the entry.

```
ID   HIV1686EN  standard; DNA; VRL; 2640 BP.
XX
AC   X96526;
XX
SV   X96526.1
XX
DT   28-AUG-1996 (Rel. 49, Created)
DT   02-MAR-1999 (Rel. 59, Last updated, Version 8)
XX
DE   Human immunodeficiency virus type 1 env gene, strain VI686
XX
KW   env gene; gp 120; gp160; gp41.
XX
OS   Human immunodeficiency virus type 1
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OC   Viruses; Retroid viruses; Retroviridae; Lentivirus;
OC   Primate lentivirus group.
XX
RN   [1]
RP   1-2640
RA   Janssens W.;
RT   _;
RL   Submitted (28-FEB-1996) to the EMBL/GenBank/DDBJ databases.
RL   W. Janssens, Institute of Tropical Medicine, Nationalestraat 155, 2000
RL   Antwerpen, BELGIUM
XX
RN   [2]
RA   Janssens W., Heyndrickx L., Van der Auwera G., Nkengasong J., Beirnaert
E.,
RA   Vereecken K., Coppens S., Willems B., Fransen K., Peeters M., Ndumbe P.,
RA   Delaporte E., Van der Groen G.;
RT   "Interpatient genetic variability of HIV-1 group O";
RL   AIDS 13:41-48(1999).
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RN   [3]
RP   1-2640
RA   Delaporte E., Janssens W., Peeters M., Buve A., Dibanga G., Perret J.L.,
RA   Ditsambou V., Georges Courbot M.C., Georges A., Bourgeois A., Samb B.,
RA   Henzel D., Heyndrickx L., Fransen K., Van der Groen G., Larouz B.,
RA   Mbe J.R.;
RT   "Epidemiological and Molecular characteristics of HIV infection in Gabon
RT   (1986 - 1994).";
RL   AIDS 10:903-910(1996).
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DR   SPTREMBL; Q9WIU9; Q9WIU9.
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Yours sincerely

> -------- Original Message --------
> Received: from viper.abbott.com (viper.abbott.com [130.36.44.77])by
> alpha1.ebi.ac.uk
> (8.9.3/8.9.3) with SMTP id XAA336530for <DATALIB@EBI.AC.UK>; Thu, 7 Feb 2002
> 23:48:46
> GMT
> From: John.Hackett@abbott.com
> Received: from abtmr1.abbott.com (abtmr1.abbott.com [10.254.245.1])by
> viper.abbott.com (Switch-2.1.4/Switch-2.1.0) with ESMTP id g17Nms514950for
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> Thu, 7
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> Subject: EMBL Release date
> To: DATALIB@ebi.ac.uk
> X-Mailer: Lotus Notes Release 5.0.5 September 22, 2000
> Message-ID: <OF61ED78A8.AFE557B2-ON86256B59.0081F945@cmis.abbott.com>
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> |September 22,
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> MIME-Version: 1.0
> Content-type: text/plain; charset=us-ascii
>
> Hello,
>
> I was accessing a sequence (X96526) from the EMBL database and have a
question

> regarding the release f this sequence to the public. There is a line on the
> initial text page that states the following "DT 28-August-1996 (Rel. 49,
> Created)". Is my interpretation correct that Aug 28, 1996 is the date this
> sequence was first available to the public? Thank you for your help in
> clarifying this.
>
> Best regards,
>
> John
>
> Dr. John Hackett, Jr.
> Abbott Laboratories
> D-9NG, Bldg AP20
> 100 Abbott Park Road
> Abbott Park, IL
> 60064-6015
>

(ν)

#30

PATENT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant: John R. Hackett, Jr. et al.	Group Art Unit: 1648 Certificate of Facsimile Transmission under 37 CFR §1.8(a): I hereby certify that this paper (along with any paper referred to as being attached or enclosed) is being transmitted via facsimile, said transmission to be completed before midnight Eastern time on the date shown below, addressed to the following recipient:
Serial No.: 08/911,824	
Filed: August 15, 1997	
For: Novel Antigen Constructs Useful in the Detection and Differentiation of Antibodies to HIV	
	Commissioner for Patents Attn: Examiner Myron G. Hill Group Art Unit: 1648 Washington, D.C. 20231
Attorney Docket No.: 6165.US.01	
Examiner: Myron G. Hill	Recipient Telefax Number: (703) 872-9307
	Kimberly A. Forio 11-14-02

DECLARATION OF SUSHIL G. DEVARE, PURSUANT TO 37 C.F.R. SECTION 1.131

Commissioner for Patents
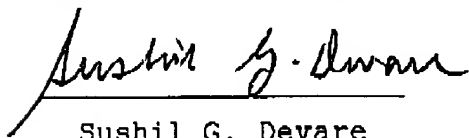Washington, D.C.   20231

Sir:

I, Sushil G. Devare, declare as follows:

1.   This declaration is to establish completion of the invention in this application in the United States, at a date prior to August 28, 1996.

2.   I am one of the inventors of the above-identified application.

3.   I have read the Office Action mailed on May 31, 2002 in connection with the above-identified application. In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-2 as being obvious under 35 U.S.C. Section 103(a) in view of Delaporte et al. (AIDS 1996, vol. 10 pages 903-910) (hereinafter "Delaporte").

1

4.   To establish the date of completion of the claimed invention attached as Exhibit B is a reproduction of the notebook entries of Jennifer Lund. Ms. Lund was a Laboratory Technician who cloned and determined the entire *env* protein sequence of the HIV-1 Group O Isolate HAM112, which is shown in SEQ ID NO:61. Ms. Lund conducted this work at my direction and under my supervision.

5.   From these documents, it can be seen that the claimed invention was made prior to August 28, 1996.

6.   I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code, and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

_____   _____
        Sushil G. Devare   Date
                                         11/12/02

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